

MISSISSIPPI WIRELESS COMMUNICATION COMMISSION

October 2, 2008 Meeting Minutes

Place: MDOT Auditorium

Commission Members Present:

MS Department of Corrections
MS Department of Information Technology Services
MS Department of Transportation
MS Dept of Public Safety
MS Dept of Public Safety
MS Department of Homeland Security
MS Department of Environmental Quality
MS Supervisors Association
MS National Guard
MS Emergency Management Agency
MS Fire Chiefs' Association
MS Sheriffs Association
MS Municipal League

Chris Epps
David Litchliter
Willie Huff
Donnell Berry
Stephen Simpson
Jay Ledbetter
Keith Harkins
Joel Yelverton
Gary Ladd
Mike Womack
Tom Lariviere
Tim Perkins
Knox Ross

Advisory Members Present:

Senator Nolan Mettetal
Senator Nickey Browing
Representative Tyrone Ellis
Representative Ray Rogers

Chairman Chris Epps called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM and welcomed guests in attendance.

Chairman Epps called for a motion to approve the minutes of the August meeting. Joel Yelverton made the motion, and it was seconded by Tom Lariviere. The motion passed with none opposed.

Chairman Epps recognized Joel Yelverton to report for the Procurement Review Committee. The Police Department of the City of Holly Springs is moving and is requesting a microwave connection at a total cost of \$273,011.70. Keith Harkins made the motion for approval, and it was seconded by Tom Lariviere. The motion passed with none opposed.

Willie Huff reported for the Governance/Interoperability Committee. A MSWIN Site on Wheels (SOW) and approximately 150 handheld radios were used during the presidential debate in Oxford. Officers from approximately 12 jurisdictions, including the FBI and Secret Service, communicated with the units. No gateway or other device was needed for interoperability for the units securing the debate site.

Huff reported that the Committee met and discussed the need for a networked interoperable gateway system as presented by Raytheon at the last Commission meeting. Huff further stated that Raytheon had presented an informational packet including some budgetary pricing and assumptions in 2007. A copy was given to Commission members.

Huff suggested Raytheon be allowed to update the packet; and if any other vendor wanted to provide information pertaining to their gateway solutions, they should do so.

Mr. Litchliter cautioned that a networked interoperable gateway solution may or may not be sole sourced and may have to be bid. He further stated that vendors should be aware that information they may provide is public record and should be marked as proprietary and confidential, as appropriate.

Huff explained the committee's position on gateway technology:

The WCC recognizes the value provided by gateway technology, such as the ACU-1000, and fully intends to utilize gateways to establish interoperability with local entities where appropriate. A number of local agencies have radio infrastructure that is current and will be in use for an extended period. Gateways can provide interoperability to MSWIN for these local agencies. Some local agencies currently use gateways to interoperate among the sheriff, municipal police, municipal and volunteer fire, and EOC entities within the county. Due to funding limitations, these counties may decide to join MSWIN but use a phased approach whereby the gateways will continue to be utilized until all subscriber units can be replaced.

The Interoperability Committee recommends that the commission evaluate requests to upgrade or acquire gateways on a case-by-case basis. The Committee also recommends that any funding allocated for interoperability be first directed to using MSWIN as the primary radio system and then to obtaining or updating gateways. The Committee does not recommend the creation of another statewide IP communication system.

The project update was presented by Willie Huff. Huff stated that the project was ahead of schedule for Phase 1. Under the new schedule, Phase 1 should be operational by the beginning of the 2009 hurricane season. Towers are under construction, and completed towers are being equipped with the required electronics. Site acquisition efforts are under way for Phase 2 with an emphasis on a microwave connection to Jackson. This would enable wide area usage from US 49 in Jackson to the coast. A microwave connection may not be available by the 2009 hurricane season, but there can be connection from Jackson to the coast by installing a site in the Jackson area and connecting it to the master site. Efforts are underway to complete that connection.

Commissioner Epps recognized David Litchliter for an update of the PSIC grant. This grant for \$10,989,654 was sub-granted to ITS on behalf of the WCC by MS Homeland Security. The grant is for funding to improve interoperability and allows the purchase of gateway technology and additional radios. The grant funds will be used as a reimbursement to locals. A 25% match is required, and in-kind matches are acceptable. There was discussion about guidelines to administer the grant, limiting options of the products that could be purchased, and limiting the funds a single entity may receive. This grant will be coordinated by ITS along with the Interoperability/Governance Committee.

Mr. Litchliter also handed out a report on the monthly expenditures. Total expenses for September were \$1,302,598.95 and income from interest was \$6,199.43. The report indicated a cumulative revenue total of \$17,873,224.66, cumulative expenses total of \$17,201,004.61, and a remaining balance of approximately \$672,000. Tom Lariviere made a motion to approve payment of the September expenses. Knox Ross seconded the motion, and it passed with none opposed.

Mr. Litchliter also stated that the WCC should be receiving \$10 million of the \$20 million in October for bond funding authorized by the legislature in Senate Bill 3201 (2007 session).

Mr. Epps recognized Mike Murphy from Louisiana. He informed the Commission of an upcoming session on December 7-9 on interoperability and said that all Commission members would receive an invitation for this event.

Mr. Womack asked about the timing of the actions of the Personnel Committee to select an Executive Manager for the WCC. Mr. Litchliter mentioned that Bill Roach is expected to stay through summer 2009. Mr. Epps stated that the WCC has hired two employees since the last meeting.

The next meeting will be November 6, 2008, in the MDOT Auditorium at 1:30 PM.

There being no other business, Joel Yelverton made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Litchliter seconded the motion. The motion passed with none opposed.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 2:30 PM.